

Nepal

Himalayas In Style Trip Code FNIS

Suggested Itinerary in Depth

Although we suggest an excellent route through Nepal here, one which has worked successfully for many other families in the past, this trip is designed so that you can tailor-make your own itinerary, dates, duration and night-stops to suit your own family. Please contact us if have any queries or advice or would like a quotation.

Day 1 Fly to Kathmandu

Depart London on an overnight flight to Kathmandu.

Day 2 Arrive Kathmandu

On arrival at Kathmandu Airport you will be met and transferred to the Shangri-La Hotel which is centrally located, just five kilometres away from the airport and two kilometres from the heart of the city. Rooms are furnished with contemporary elegance, fully air-conditioned and heated with individually controlled thermostats, complemented by an excellent variety of dining, sports and recreation facilities. There is also an excellent garden and swimming pool. **Shangri-la Hotel (breakfast)**

Day 3 Walking Tour of Kathmandu

Today a half-day sightseeing tour will be arranged to allow a glimpse of the real Kathmandu. In hidden corners of this fabled city, the ancient past lingers on in a maze of narrow streets crowded with turmeric sellers, small golden temples, wandering cows, and traditional crafts and workshops. Our exploration takes us to places such as, the old part of the Kathmandu City and to the 2000-year-old Bodnath Stupa. Once a traditional medieval city of breathtaking Newari architecture, Kathmandu is now fully grown into an urban capital with a population of half-million people. Nevertheless, it has not lost its magic - especially in the ancient, narrow streets and in countless temples and shrines where Buddhist and Hindu iconography mix in fantastic ways. Bodha is a 1,400-year-old stupa that attracts pilgrims from across Buddhist Asia. At Bodha, we see pilgrims circling the stupa to make a *kora*, turning the stupa's giant prayer wheels as they go. With new monasteries sprouting up all around it, Bodha is rapidly becoming a world centre of Tibetan Buddhist study. Swayambu is an ancient Buddhist temple with commanding views of the valley. We make a steep climb of 300 steps to reach this stupa. Swayambu was established as a shrine around 500 BC and by the 13th century AD, had become an important centre of Buddhist learning. Its eyes, painted on four cardinal points, keep watch over the Kathmandu Valley. Pashupatinath, with its triple-roofed temple, burning *ghats*, and wandering *sadhus* (holy men) along the sacred Bagmati River, is one of four major sites of Shiva worship on the subcontinent. Its temples and ghats are set along the Bagmati because the waters of this river eventually flow south to join the mighty Ganges, the holy river of India. The entrance to Pashupatinath's inner temple precinct is for Hindus only, but from the outside, we are able to see the huge structure of Nandi, the bull, and a smaller statue of Hanuman. We make our way to the little feudal city of Bhaktapur, nestled in a time-warp of temples and back-streets with all the commotion and colour that speaks of long tradition and rich heritage. We'll also include lunch at the exclusive Shivapuri Heights Cottage. **Shangri-la Hotel (breakfast)**

Day 4 Fly to Pokhara; Himalayan walk

You'll be transferred to the airport for the 30-minute flight to Pokhara. After arrival in Pokhara, you'll transfer by road with guides and porters to begin our hike in the mountains (1-hour). The walk will follow a ridgeline in the lower foothills of the Annapurnas with surrounding views of the Pokhara Valley. The route then drops to the Modi River Valley, where the Ker & Downey's Sanctuary Lodge is located at 3470 ft/1060 meters. The lodge has magnificent views of the sacred and unclimbed Fishtail Mountain, or Machapuchhare, as it is locally known. Lunch is provided at the lodge, followed by an optional walk to the nearby village of Birethanti or free time to explore the surrounding river valley. **Ker & Downey Lodge (breakfast, lunch & dinner)**

Day 5 Visit Annapurna Conservation Area Project

After breakfast, you'll leave the Sanctuary Lodge, walking out through the village of Lamakhet, across the Modi River and walk to the Gurung Lodge in the village of Majhgaun at 4750 ft/1450 metres. This uphill trek to the Gurung Lodge takes about 2 hours and passes through the village of Patlekhet and terraced farmland (total trek time 3 hours). The Gurung Lodge is built along the lines of a traditional Nepalese village. Every room has spectacular views of Annapurna South and Hiunchuli. **Ker & Downey Lodge (breakfast, lunch & dinner)**

Day 6 Walking Pokhara and explore local villages or relax

After an early breakfast, you'll depart along the ridge and descend through a wooded hillside and terraced farmland to the valley floor. Trek time 1 ½ hours. We then transfer by vehicle to Pokhara (45 minutes) and on to the Shangri-la Village Resort which boasts a swimming pool and excellent facilities. **Shangri-la Hotel (breakfast)**

Day 7 Pokhara; option to go rafting on the River Seti

After breakfast at the hotel you'll take the 1½ hour drive to the Seti River. Here you will be met by your experienced boat crew, who will give you a full briefing prior to launch. All items for your overnight stay will be carried in the raft in waterproof bags. The remainder of your luggage will travel in the vehicle to the raft finish point. The Seti River offers a fine combination

of superb scenery and gentle rapids. You'll overnight at the Seti River Fixed Camp. The camp is a fully staffed facility and is situated on a grassy bank overlooking the beach and river. Accommodation is in large safari style equipped tents. Each tent has twin beds with sheets and blankets and attached western-style flush toilets and showers with hot and cold running water. There is a large central dining room built in traditional style where guests gather for meals. Food is both Continental and Nepalese. In keeping with the surroundings, kerosene lamps, torches and candles are provided after dusk since there is no electricity in the camp. **Seti River Camp (breakfast, lunch & dinner)**

Days 8-10 Visit Royal Chitwan National Park

After a hearty breakfast and packing we leave camp at about 9.30am. Today we have time to explore, bird-watch, photograph and learn about the local people. A packed lunch is served en route. After racing through a good series of grade 2+ rapids, we reach the confluence of the Trisuli River. Notice the difference in temperature of this much colder glacial river. After 15 minutes we end our trip at Gai Ghat and take the two-hour drive towards the Royal Chitwan National Park and the Machan Wildlife Camp. The camp is located to the east of the Royal Chitwan National Park where the Sal forest of the Chitwan jungle meets the wide and beautiful valley of the Rapti River. Broad grassland sweeps north to the Mahabharata range and virgin jungle extends south to the Churia hills. On clear days from Chitwan, several 8,000 metre-peaks including Annapurna, Dhaulagiri and Manaslu can be seen. Your accommodation at Machan is in timber-framed bungalows with private bathrooms and modern toilet amenities. To blend with the environment, lighting is by a combination of kerosene lanterns and electric generator. At Machan Wildlife Resort, a team of expert naturalists has been formed under the leadership of Dr. Charles Ramble, an anthropologist and naturalist with wide experience of Nepal. They will share their knowledge of the jungle's flora and fauna as they guide you on elephant-back and in Land Rovers on nature walks and bird-watching excursions. Wildlife in Chitwan includes the greater one-horned rhinoceros, spotted deer, hog deer, sambar deer and barking deer as well as a wide variety of birdlife. With a bit of luck, there is always the chance of glimpsing leopard, sloth bear and Royal Bengal tiger. Canoe in traditional dugout canoes will give you a tranquil view of the jungle. A few miles drive upstream, the villages of the Danwar tribal community allow a glimpse into the lives of the jungle dwellers of Nepal. **Machan Wildlife Camp (breakfast, lunch & dinner)**

Day 11 Return to Kathmandu

Leaving the jungle behind, you'll be transferred to the Bharatpur airstrip for the 30-minute flight back to Kathmandu. On arrival you'll be met and transferred to the Hotel Shangri-La. Rest of day at leisure with dinner at the Rum Doodle Restaurant. Rum Doodle Restaurant, named after the mountain, is located at 40,000 feet, bears homage to the eccentric English mountaineers who climbed the Rum Doodle in xxx despite the efforts of the expeditions Yogistani cook 'Pong'. **Shangri-la Hotel (breakfast)**

Day 12 Fly to London

Sadly it's time depart. You'll be transferred to Kathmandu Airport for your flight back to London.

This itinerary includes our group flights from London. If you are making other flight arrangements, please refer to your Confirmation Invoice and Joining Instructions for details of the start of the trip. Please remember that international flights and trip dates can change, so make sure you always purchase flexible tickets. Each itinerary is planned many months in advance, and consequently there are factors over which we have no control which could make changes necessary. We will always endeavour to keep you informed of any such changes in advance.

Is this right for your family? This special journey offers the possibility of staying in carefully selected lodges and hotels – such as the highly acclaimed heritage style Dwarikas or Shangri-La hotels in Kathmandu, and Tiger Tops or Machan Wildlife Camp in Chitwan. We also offer the flexibility of tailor making our “suggested itinerary” below so you can choose the dates and night-stops which you feel are most suited to your family.

Climate The best time to visit Nepal is between October to May. The mornings and evenings are invigorating, with cooler temperatures and clear skies rising to around 25°C during the day. Pokhara generally enjoys warmer temperatures – rising to around 30°C.

Average climate in Kathmandu.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Max °C	18	19	25	28	30	29	29	28	28	27	23	19
Min °C	2	4	7	12	16	19	20	20	19	13	7	3
Rainfall (mm)	15	41	23	58	122	246	373	345	155	38	8	3

Accommodation The hotels and lodges used for this tour are of 4-5 star standard. All rooms are air-conditioned, modern, clean and comfortable and offer friendly service. Accommodation is booked on twin-share basis. The camps can be described as luxurious.

Food and Drink In Kathmandu the range of restaurants is quite outstanding - from French to Japanese, from Indian to American! Even the best restaurants are cheap; it is very difficult to spend more than £5 on the largest of meals. Hence we feel that the choice must be left with you. We do advise though, that in the interests of avoiding stomach upsets before the trek, you favour the cleaner, more upmarket restaurants. The darker and more interesting eating-houses should be left for our return! The lodges will serve first class meals at the beginning and end of the day and tasty picnics will be provided for lunch, taken at suitably picturesque spots along the route. Please remember to drink plenty of bottled water.

Currency The unit of currency is the Nepalese Rupee (NER). At the time of writing (January 2007) UK£1 = 140NER and US\$1= 70NER. Credit cards are readily accepted in banks, larger hotels and some souvenir shops. We recommend that you change money at the airport on arrival.

Local Costs

A small bottle of mineral water (500ml)	£0.40
A large bottle of mineral water (1 litre)	£0.80
A can of coke (soft drinks)	£0.50
A carton or bottle of fruit juice	£1.00
A bottle of beer	£1.50
Tea or coffee	£1.00
A light lunch time snack – sandwich for example	£1.50
A two course meal* - excluding drinks	£2.00
A three course meal* - excluding drinks	£3.00

*Based on a mid range tourist restaurant.

Tipping is a recognised part of life and although at your discretion you will be expected to reward service. Please remember that tipping should be a way for individuals to thank staff for good service. As a guideline each traveller should allow £2-3 per day to cover tips for local staff. Tipping in restaurants is generally around 10% of the total bill.

Language The language in Nepal is Nepali, but English is widely spoken in the tourist areas.

Time The time in Kathmandu, Nepal is GMT + 5 ¼ hours

Packing List Please refer to our separate “packing list”

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Clothing and Equipment List for Families

Western clothing is acceptable everywhere, but outside cities Nepalese tend to dress conservatively. Out of respect for local culture we recommend that - particularly in rural areas - you dress accordingly i.e. no tight-fitting clothing, low-cut or sleeveless tops, etc. Shorts are OK in main tourist areas, but they (and skirts) should reach at least to the knee. Everyone should be prepared to cover bare arms and legs when entering religious buildings, and take off their shoes. Up in the hills it can get surprisingly cold, so pack some warm and windproof clothing. We recommend comfortable lightweight casual cotton clothing in lowland areas, and medium-weight clothing and layers for the hills. A sun hat, sunglasses and high-factor sunscreen are all essential. You may wish to pack a couple of smart casual outfits for the evenings.

The following list of clothing and equipment is intended to be fairly comprehensive and experienced travellers may well take a good deal less luggage than we recommend. We have also included a few extras that are intended to increase your comfort and are entirely optional.

CLOTHING	NUMBER PER PERSON	Check	EQUIPMENT	Check
Walking shoes/boots	1 pair		Lightweight Daypack – 25 litres	
Trainers or strong sandals	1 pair		Sunglasses	
Smart casual outfits			Sunhat / Baseball cap	
Windproof/waterproof jacket	1 lightweight - optional		Personal First Aid Kit	
T-Shirts/Polo shirts	3+		Camera, film and accessories	
Long casual trousers	2+		Reading material	
Shorts	2		Binoculars	
Long sleeve shirt	2+		Guide book & map	
Thin fleece or sweatshirt	1		Insect repellent (high DEET content)	
Swimwear	1		Washing & shaving kit – wet wipes useful & refreshing	
Smart-casual wear	For the evenings		Anti-histamine tablets / ointment	

ITEM	Check	ITEM	Check
Passport/ Visa		Sunscreen – lots of it	
Air Tickets		Moisturising cream & lip salve	
Money/Travellers Cheques		Small sewing kit & safety pins	
Cash Cards/Visa		Universal travelling adapter	
Insurance Documents		Small calculator	
Trip Information and Itinerary		Notebook/diary/pen	
Money Security Belt/Pouch		Toilet paper / tissues	
Spectacles/Contact Lenses		Scissor/mirror/nail clippers	
		Games, books and toys for your kids	

For details regarding hand luggage restrictions please visit www.baa.com for details